

voice has often resulted in new American citizens, reunited families and helped place adopted babies and children in loving homes.

Through her years of service to the Senate, Joyce has become familiar with a number of Federal agencies and departments and she has been more than willing to share her considerable institutional knowledge. In fact, her expertise and knowledge is so extensive that employees of the U.S. Customs and Immigration Service, as well as other congressional and Senate offices, often look to Joyce for guidance and information.

I also want to take a moment to mention Joyce's professional skills and her approach to her cases. She has an emotional connection to the constituents who contact her, but she is always calm, professional and informative, even in the face of the most severe hardship. She will provide constituents with the right answer, even if it is not the one they want to hear.

I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating Joyce on her many years of dedicated service to our Nation. I also want to take this opportunity to thank Joyce's husband Paul, daughter Kate, and son Paul Michael for sharing Joyce with the U.S. Senate. I wish her the all best in her future endeavors. She will be greatly missed.

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL MARC HOFFMEISTER

Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, I wish to recognize a fine Alaskan, brave warrior, dedicated military leader, and inspiration to all who know him. LTC Marc Hoffmeister is an Army engineer and wounded warrior currently serving on the staff of Alaska Command on Elmendorf AFB, AK. Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmeister may well be one of the most outstanding and motivational military leaders I have had the pleasure of knowing.

Wounded by a roadside bomb while deployed to Iraq in 2007, he suffered both traumatic brain injury and a very serious physical injury to the left side of his body, injuries that threatened possible long-term disability and a possible end to his military career. Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmeister had long been committed to his career as well as a life focused on the outdoors. He and his wife Gayle had a long reputation of intense physical training and extreme outdoor adventure. Now he was facing the very real possibility of a life without either.

Today Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmeister, through sheer determination, dedication, and the help of his wife Gayle, is still serving our country and still taking on the most extreme outdoor challenges. This fact did not happen overnight and came at a cost—a long stay in the hospital, intense rehabilitation, and much physiological effort to come to grips with a life that would be different but not debilitated.

During his recovery Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmeister came in touch with

scores of other wounded warriors all dealing with life-changing challenges and the need to rise above them and continue living. His ability to help these young warriors who had made selfless sacrifices in service to our country turned out to be a significant motivation for his own recovery.

Recently Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmeister completed climbing the tallest mountain in North America. At 20,320 feet, Mount McKinley, Denali, is referred to as "The Great One" and is located about 150 miles north of Anchorage. On this climb, Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmeister took other wounded warriors, two of whom were amputees. Three members of this team, including Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmeister, made the summit. The climb, called Operation Denali, was planned and lead by Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmeister and was designed to show wounded warriors around the country their physical and mental injuries are not the end but rather a beginning of a new life.

Marc and his wife recently went to South Africa and climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania as another example of "anything is possible," even in the face of extreme physical adversity. They both continue to be involved in the wounded warrior program and are routinely asked to provide motivational speeches to organizations around Alaska. Lieutenant Colonel Hoffmeister was recently chosen as the National Geographic Readers Choice Adventurer of the Year for 2009.

Madam President and colleagues, please join me in recognizing the efforts of true warrior, hero, leader, and humanitarian, LTC Marc Hoffmeister, U.S. Army Alaska. We thank him for his dedication, drive, and selfless service both to his fellow wounded warriors as well as the United States of America.

2010 ALASKA WINTER OLYMPIANS

Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, I wish to recognize the athleticism of the Alaska members of the 2010 U.S. Winter Olympic team. These six outstanding Alaskans represent not only some of the finest and most skilled athletes in the United States but are also incredible examples of Alaska's grit and determination. Alaska is very proud to have these six outstanding athletes competing in this year's Winter Olympics.

Callan Chythlook Sifsof of Girdwood, AK, competed in the snowboard cross competition. Callan is the first Alaska Native to make the U.S. Winter Olympic team. She grew up in a part of Alaska known as "the Bush" and spent her first years in a village along the Bering Sea. Before moving to Girdwood, Callan never imagined herself as an Olympian. She holds the double title of 2007 U.S. national champion and junior national champion in boardercross.

Jeremy Teela's home town is Anchorage, AK. He finished ninth in the 10-

kilometer biathlon sprint during the 2010 Winter Olympics, the best American result to date in biathlon. A member of the 2002, 2006, and 2010 U.S. Olympic teams, Teela's career has spanned more than a decade of impressive finishes. He has been a member of the U.S. national team since 1996.

Jay Hakkinen, of Kasilof, AK, is a three-time Olympian, and his 10th place finish in the Olympic 20-kilometer individual biathlon competition in 2006 solidified his reputation as one of the top biathletes in the United States. Jay's career began when he spent his junior year of high school in Norway as a foreign exchange student. There he found a biathlon club; it was then he decided to focus on biathlon and began pursuing the sport.

Kikkan Randall, from Anchorage, AK, made her Olympic debut in the 2002 Winter Olympics. At the 2006 Winter Olympics, Kikkan finished ninth in the Olympic sprint, the best Olympic result in cross-country skiing by an American woman. She topped that in 2010, finishing eighth in individual sprint classic. Kikkan helped her team finish in sixth place in the 2010 Winter Olympics women's team sprint freestyle race.

James Southam is from Anchorage, AK. He started racing in high school, and, after training for 10 years, he won his first ski race at age 25. Since then, James has been one of the top distance racers in the country, representing the United States in the 2006 Olympic winter games and the past three world championships. In the 2010 Olympic winter games he placed 34th in the men's 30-kilometer pursuit.

Holly Brooks moved to Alaska in 2004. Upon her arrival, she started her second coaching job as the head ski coach for West Anchorage High School and worked part time at a ski shop and for a local consulting firm. In 2006, she was offered a full-time ski coaching position at Alaska Pacific University Nordic Ski Center. In 2010, Holly competed in the 10-kilometer freestyle and 15-kilometer pursuit at the Olympics.

Kerry Weiland is originally from Palmer, AK. Kerry started playing hockey at age 5 and later excelled on the Palmer High School boys' hockey team and continued on at the University of Wisconsin, where she was a two-time All-American. Kerry scored a key goal in the game against Sweden, which moved the United States onto the gold medal round. She is now a proud member of the 2010 U.S. Winter Olympic silver medal hockey team.

Madam President and colleagues, please join me in recognizing the efforts of Alaska's finest winter athletes. We thank them for their dedication, hard work, and representation of the United States and Alaska at the 2010 Winter Olympics.